Building Strong Families

Warning Signs of Stress

This is a list of some warning signs that help you know if you have stress in your life. Put a check mark next to any statement that is true for you. Are there any other signs of stress that are not listed here? If so, add them at the bottom.

- Other people often annoy me.
- I get angry with others easily.
- I get anxious or impatient at delays caused by others or me.
- My neck or back often feels tense.
- I often have headaches or stomach aches.
- I have trouble sleeping at night.
- I sometimes eat when I’m not hungry.
- I often lose my appetite.
- I often get angry in harmful ways.
- I worry about things I cannot change.
- I often have diarrhea or constipation.
- I expect a lot of others and myself.
- I get upset when others or I don’t meet my expectations.
- I use more alcohol, drugs (even aspirin), coffee, or cigarettes.
- I lose my temper easily with others.
- Noise, music, laughing, or talking gets on my nerves.
- I often yell at other people.
- I have nervous habits such as cracking knuckles, biting nails, or scratching.
- It’s hard for me to talk about a problem with a person who is involved.
- It’s hard for me to listen to someone else’s point of view.
- I don’t have a close friend or person I know whom I can discuss problems with.
- I often “escape” by napping or daydreaming.
- I take long lunch breaks and/or coffee breaks.
- I take the “long way” to work.
- I feel rushed, but I’m getting nowhere fast.

Adapted from Roma Gay Adkins, Stress Level Questionnaire, Cooperative Extension Service, West Virginia University, Center for Extension and Continuing Education. Further adapted by Gail Rice, Literacy Specialist and Consultant.